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Francis P. Jones, Editor

Wallace C. Merwin, Executive Secretary

CHRISTIANS IN THE CONSULTATIVE CONFERENCE

The May 11 Tien Feng records a statement made to the Political Consultative Conference by its Christian members Y. T. Wu, Y. C. Tu, Cora Deng, Yen Chia-le, Bishop K. H. Ting and Miss Shih Yu-chang. It begins by praising the miraculous achievements of these ten years of Communist rule. Then it briefly reviews the history of the Protestant Church in China from 1807 on, admitting that it was just a tool of imperialism up until Liberation, when the missionaries withdrew from China. Eight years of Three Self Movement education had given the church a new outlook, but even during the past year a considerable number of reactionary elements, bad elements, and rightist elements (three separate categories) have been uncovered within the church. "We have exposed them, and made it impossible for them to continue to deceive the people."

"The unprecedented progress taking place in our country has made us realize that we must quickly and thoroughly change both our own thinking and our church structure.

"First, we realized that the Chinese Christian Church was built upon the basis of the exploiting class, and to serve the exploiting class, and in many cities the church owned so much property that it was itself an exploiter. In particular we recognized that the number and distribution of church buildings had not been decided by the needs of our religious life, but by the dictates of imperialist aggression. For example there used to be eight different churches of eight different denominations on one street. Each denomination kept itself apart, hopelessly dividing us Chinese Christians, and thus wasting a great deal of human and natural resources. During the past year clergy and laymen have reached a new understanding of the situation, and after much deliberation have made a rational readjustment in accordance with the actual needs of church members. The work of the church is now being carried out in a spirit of union, and its leadership has been greatly strengthened. This has given the church an entirely new appearance. It is a source of great satisfaction of the rank and file of church members that while engaging in the task of socialist construction they may also carry on a correct religious life.

"Again, innumerable facts have made us of the clergy realize that as a result of our previous thinking, our education, our method of living and the favors we have received, we have not in the past been on the side of the working people, but on the side of the imperialists and capitalists, helping them to exploit and rule the workers. Today as we see the people unselfishly working to establish socialism, we deeply realize the shame of our past life in serving imperialists, exploiters and idlers and looking down upon workers. We now know that we must change our political thinking, or we shall be an obstruction to the progress of socialism. Therefore we Christian workers must reform ourselves. The miraculous accomplishments of the workers have greatly moved us, and their concern over us and their welcome to all our attempts at self-re-

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form have greatly stimulated us, leading us to believe that if we will only make up our minds to stand with the workers and learn from them, we shall be able to reform our political standpoint and thinking.

"During the past year many church workers have taken part in industrial production. Practically all church workers have given voluntary work either on an occasional or a regular basis. Many have answered the Party's call for steel production. Many pastors have been so energetic that they have received prizes and special recognition. By becoming one with the workers we have come to realize the greatness of the task of socialist construction, the correctness of Party leadership, and the high character of working people. More and more of us are learning to change our attitude of contempt toward labor into one of intimate and happy affection."

The statement goes on to acknowledge the correct carrying out of the policy of freedom of religious belief. "Every church has carried on its worship services, its ritual for marriages and burials, new members have been baptized, Christians continue their contributions to church work, pastors continue their visitation work, churches are kept in repair, church literature is being published, and new editions of the Bible are being printed."

Unfortunately, while Chinese Christians themselves are so satisfied with their present condition, "imperialists in America are using various Christian organizations, including the China Committee of the Division of Foreign Missions of the National Council, to carry on their old trick of maligning us. We know that American imperialists, in order to mobilize the churches against socialism and against the nationalistic aspirations of colonial areas, have pretended to be in favor of church union. But when we Chinese Christians, on the basis of a patriotic opposition to imperialism, have followed the teachings of the Bible in effecting unity, these American imperialists wantonly charge that the Chinese Church has suffered 'a severe blow.' Again, the American imperialist missionaries on the eve of Liberation tried to prepare the Church for prolonged opposition to the Chinese people by urging the preachers to undertake production. But when we Chinese Christian workers, for the sake of our own self-reform, and for the sake of our own and the national welfare, gladly throw ourselves into the task of socialist construction, these imperialists create false rumors saying that we have been subjected to 'slave labor' and that the church has suffered a 'severe blow'. It is an idle dream for American imperialism to think that by creating false rumors about the Chinese Church it can recover its lost position. The angry abuse from American imperialists is itself proof that our action was the correct one, and that American imperialism itself has suffered a severe blow."

The statement concludes with an endorsement of the Government's Tibetan policy and a pledge of loyalty.

Y. T. WU's CONGRESS SPEECH

On or about May 4 Y. T. Wu made a speech in the National People's Congress which is reported in the Peking People's Daily under the title, "Exposing the New Conspiracy of U.S. Imperialism in Utilizing Christianity to Carry Out Aggressive Activities."

After recounting how the Chinese Church was liberated from imperialistic influences in 1950, he goes on to state that the American imperialists are unwilling to accept defeat and are still trying to carry on their warfare against Communist China. He speaks of the American Council of Christian Churches which brought five pastors from Taiwan to spread rumors and slanders about the new China. Then he speaks of the Committee of One Million, which he characterizes as a "small reactionary group formed by some big capitalists in collusion with a small number of upper strata personnel of the churches."

Then he goes on to pay his respects to the Cleveland Conference on World Order. Either he or the Hong Kong translator did not know the difference between the American Council and the National Council, for our English text states this Conference was convened by the American Council. He does not accept the manifesto of that Conference recommending recognition of the People's Republic of China at its face value, as is apparent from the following paragraph:

"What was the real design of this Conference? Judging by the fact that Gross, former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, was in the chair, that former U.S. Secretary of the Air

Finletter made a speech at the Conference, and that Dulles came in person to deliver the opening address, we can tell its political background offhand. They professed that the reason for them to recommend the recognition of the People's Republic of China was that recognition does not mean approval; that 'the establishment of diplomatic relations with China makes it possible to understand the conditions in China at a more opportune moment'; that 'there is the possibility to widen the difference and gap between China and the Soviet Union'; that 'it may eliminate the suspicion of certain countries in Asia toward the United States'; and that 'new links may be established with the Chinese intellectuals who were educated in the Western way'. These were the reasons why they wanted to extend recognition to new China. Can this be called a meeting of Christians? It is nothing more than another meeting for U.S. imperialism to map out its strategy for carrying out subversive activity against China."

In fact, he says, this was only a part of the U.S. imperialist plot to create two Chinas. It will not succeed, and if the U.S. does not recognize us, that is not a loss to China, for we have our friends in "the socialist countries headed by the Soviet Union."

In the next section of the speech he denounces the rumors that have been spread to smear the new China. Under this heading he includes such items as: slandering the communes as a slave labor economy; the expressed sympathy for the bloody Tibetan rebels; the baseless charges of religious persecution; the misrepresentation of church unification as effected in 1958. On this last point he says, "The China Bulletin published by the Division of Foreign Missions of the National Council (Our Hong Kong translation says American Council), however, directed mean and shameless vituperations against this reform carried out by us, and claimed that this reform ought a 'heavy blow to bear' upon the churches of China. Why was it necessary for the missionaries of U.S. imperialism to make these vituperations and clamors? For more than a hundred years, in order to enforce its 'divide and rule' policy, the imperialists wanted not only to divide the Chinese people, but also to divide the Church in China with a variety of sects. This is because a divided church in China would facilitate imperialist domination, and could be manipulated with greater ease by imperialism as a tool to enslave the Chinese people. The solidarity and unity of the Christians in China meant the thorough destruction of the remnant foundation of imperialism in the Chinese Church. Because of this, how could they help from making these clamors?

He charges that U.S. imperialism is using Christianity to sabotage national independence movements all over the world. Rockefeller has given a large sum to study "areas of rapid social change", meaning by that the countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America which have long been dominated and enslaved by imperialism but have now awakened. In the conferences which have been called under the auspices of that study program, preposterous statements have been made about the positive value of imperialism, clearly with the purpose of undercutting the newly awakened patriotic consciousness.

Again, Rockefeller has given two million dollars, matched by two million more from the churches, to "reinforce" the Christian seminaries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Why? This is a new strategy. The imperialists are now trying to "train, by way of these seminaries, the number of Christian followers in Asia, Africa, and Latin America for use as tools to perpetuate conspiratorial activities over the churches in these countries, thus turning them into important bases for opposing the socialist camp and disintegrating the national independence movement."

His final point is that the Western church is really a warmonger. "In order to pave the way for a new world war, U.S. imperialism is in the course of recruiting the help of some reactionary Church leaders in the West. Clad in the mantle of a religionist or a theologian, these people are expected to beautify war, to uglify peace and to clamor openly for war." As an example he quotes and pours scorn upon Billy Graham's five point program for peace. Statements by the Archbishop of Canterbury and by certain German theologians are taken to mean an acceptance of warfare. "Such sensational clamors for war are often seen in the publications of the Christian churches in the West these days."

The World Council of Churches pretends to be for peace, but its declarations are designed for the skillful deception of the masses and the concealment of conspiracies. Instead of being a true religious body it has a very definite political slant. "General Secretary Visser 't Hooft

of this Council is an agent of U.S. imperialism from beginning to end." 70% of the Council's revenue comes from the U.S. Its Commission on International Affairs is headed by Nolde, "an American citizen and Dulles' favorite." "Because of this, it is only natural that the World Council of Churches and some other church leaders of the West should enthusiastically place themselves at the service of U.S. imperialism which plots for war."

He concludes by pledging that the Chinese Christian Church will continue to fight against all these subversive influences.

MISSIONARY NEWS

Recent deaths: Dr. Harry L. Canright, former Methodist missionary in Chengtu, on May 28 at the age of 95; Dr. A. N. Steward, former Methodist missionary and Professor of Botany in the University of Nanking, at Corvallis, Oregon on June 19; Mrs. John L. Benson, former missionary of Augustana Lutheran Church in Honan for forty years, and more recently resident in Minneapolis, on June 13; Mr. Godfrey Hirst, Bible Society Secretary in Central China from 1910 to 1935, at his home in Tunbridge Wells, England, on June 18.

Latest report from Maryknoll Bishop James E. Walsh is that he is now well, but still under house arrest in a Shanghai hospital.

Miss Helen Willis was able to keep the Christian Bookroom going in Shanghai until this spring, but in mid-April she was brought to trial and convicted on charges of being a rightist, helping a pastor, slandering the People's Government, and circulating the books of Wang Ming-tao. As a result, her Bookroom was confiscated and she was ordered to leave the country. She arrived in Hong Kong on April 27. Just before she left, one of her Chinese friends wrote her a note saying, "You are getting out just in time. We are expecting war."

CHURCH NEWS

Dr. S. C. Leung, a YMCA leader in China for 50 years who is now resident in Hong Kong, attended the United Church of Christ General Synod at Oberlin, Ohio, as a fraternal delegate. In an interview at Philadelphia on June 10, he opposed U.S. recognition of Red China and said, "Left alone, Red China may well collapse within a few years, because starvation, suffering and oppression are widespread."

The latest report regarding Pastor Wang Ming-tao is that he has renounced the confession which he signed at the time of his release from prison, and as a result he and his wife are back in prison again.

News about pastors in prison includes the story of one who could get out of prison if he would stop praying, but he refuses to do so. The police claim that his praying shows he is mentally unbalanced and not fit to be released. Another was severely criticized for a written request for China's deliverance from spiritual darkness. The Reds insist that with Communism's light, China cannot be in darkness.

Pastors who are still carrying on are allowed to visit Christian families, but must not lead them in prayer. One such pastor confessed privately, "We have to tell lies or we won't get through."

Word direct from Shanghai reports that the China Bible House is being carried on by a small voluntary staff who open it for two hour periods on certain days. Those who wish to purchase copies of the Bible have to register with the authorities, and this has deterred many from making purchases. However the closing of churches has made many Bibles available in second-hand book stores and purchases are now being made there. In regard to the fairly hopeful report about the China Bible House made by the Australian delegation at the time of its visit several years ago, a Chinese Christian who apparently was one of those interviewed by that delegation, has since then said, "Of course we were not able to tell them all the truth about the situation."

Y. T. Wu, a deputy of the National People's Congress, whose speech to that Congress is reported on in this issue, is not only a deputy, but is also a member of the Standing Committee of that Congress.

A letter from one of the port cities tells of a Bible woman who was not able to obtain a ration card, and thus could buy no food. A Christian family took her in to live with them, and finally the government assigned her to the job of gathering oysters at low tide, which would involve constant wading in sea water, a rather strenuous type of work for a woman in her fifty's. For this work she was paid in Chinese currency 40¢ a day, of which she had to pay 20¢ for her noon meal and 8¢ for the round trip to and from work, leaving her with 12¢ a day for all other expenses.

An Amoy report states that food was so scarce at Christmas time that none of the Christians could celebrate Christmas with feasts, as had been the custom in other years.